

Deuteronomy 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Analysis

The warning against pride—'And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth'—addresses the universal temptation to attribute success to personal ability rather than divine blessing. Taking credit for God's gifts reveals prideful forgetfulness. The antidote is remembering 'it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth' (verse 18)—even ability to produce wealth comes from God. Recognizing God's ownership of all prevents arrogance and promotes stewardship perspective.

Historical Context

This warning anticipated Israel's coming prosperity in Canaan, when military victories and agricultural abundance might tempt pride. Centuries later, Nebuchadnezzar exemplified this pride ('is not this great Babylon, that I have built,' Daniel 4:30), facing immediate judgment. Jesus' parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21) similarly warns against pride in wealth earned without acknowledging God. Modern prosperity gospel theology inverts Scripture—making wealth the goal rather than recognizing its danger.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How can you maintain grateful stewardship perspective rather than proud ownership mentality toward material blessings?
2. What specific successes or abilities tempt you toward pride rather than recognizing God's enabling grace?

Interlinear Text

וְאָמַרְתָּ	בְּלִבְּךָ	כֹּחִי	וְעַצְמִי	יָדִי	וְשִׁמִּי
And thou say	in thine heart	My power	and the might	of mine hand	hath gotten
H559	H3824	H3581	H6108	H3027	H6213
אֶת־לִי	הַיְּהוָה	הַיְּהוָה			
H0	H853	H2088			
	me this wealth				
	H2428				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 9:4 (Parallel theme): Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

1 Corinthians 4:7 (Parallel theme): For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

Daniel 4:30 (Parallel theme): The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

Deuteronomy 7:17 (Parallel theme): If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them?

Hosea 12:8 (Parallel theme): And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: in all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin.

Habakkuk 1:16 (Parallel theme): Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.

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